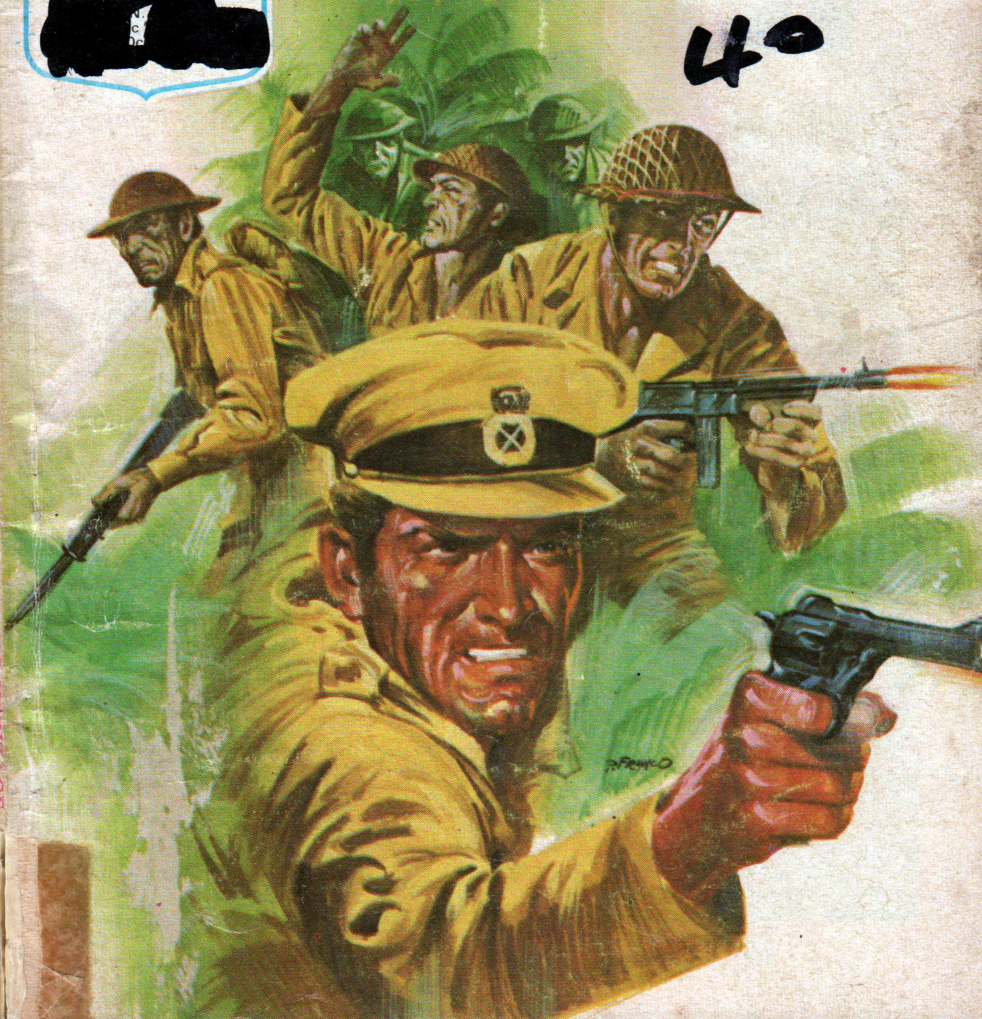


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EXCHANGE
ARDS - STATIONER

STRANGE HERITAGE

A BABY ON A BATTLEFIELD SOUNDS WILD ON GOLD COAST HOLIDAY
IMPROBABLE—YET BECAUSE OF ONE, CAPTAIN RUFUS MADE A DECISION THAT PROFOUNDLY
AFFECTED THE LIVES OF A VILLAGE AND A DIVISION. CRUISES & DOLLS
TWEED HEADS



Chapter I. *ORPHAN OF BATTLE*

THE MIGHTY GERMAN OFFENSIVE OF MARCH, 1918, HAD FINALLY FAILED. THE ALLIED ARMIES WERE SMASHING THEIR WAY TO VICTORY . . .



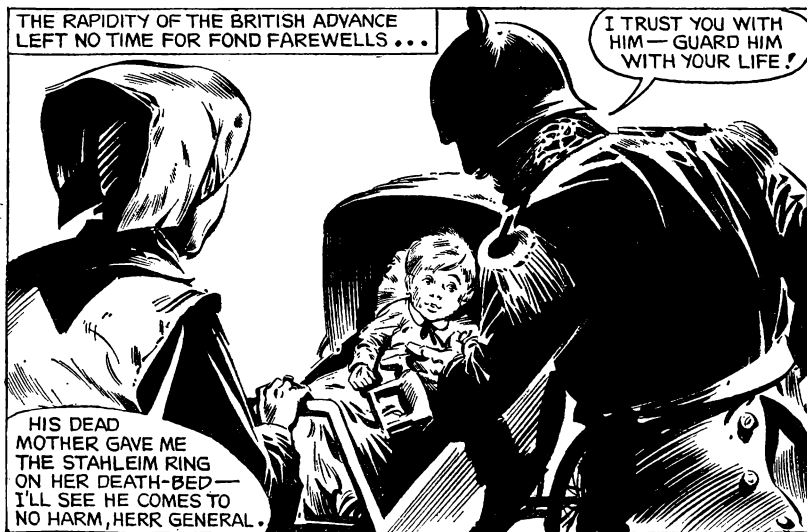
THE SPEED OF THE BRITISH ADVANCE, WITH ARMOURD CARS SPEARHEADING THE ATTACK, SURPRISED THE GERMANS . . .



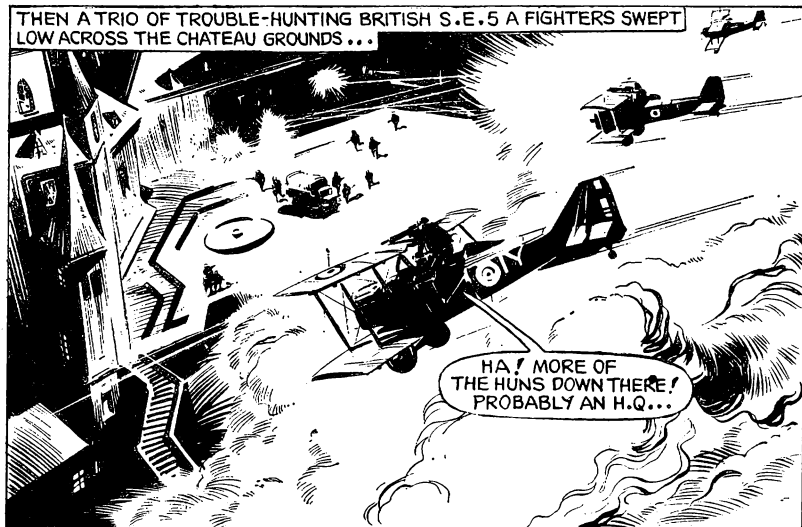
COLONEL GENERAL SIEGFRIED VON STAHLHEIM WAS A PROUD MAN WHO MEANT TO FIGHT TO THE BITTER END . . .



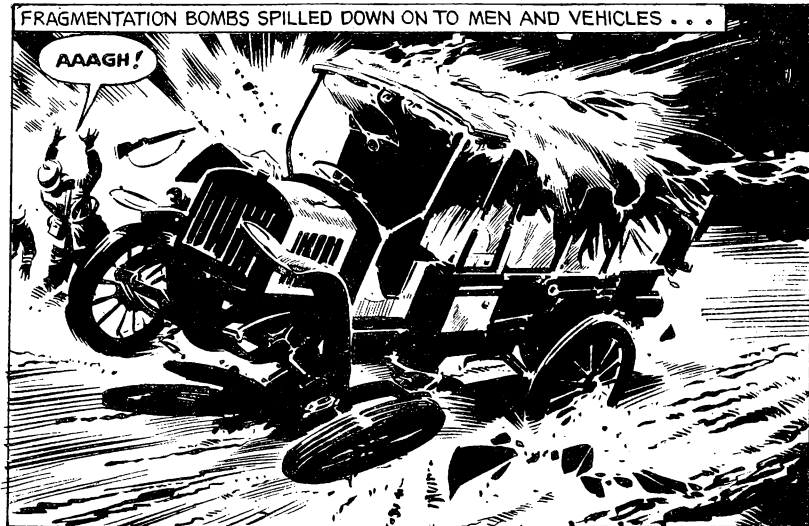
THE RAPIDITY OF THE BRITISH ADVANCE LEFT NO TIME FOR FOND FAREWELLS . . .



THEN A TRIO OF TROUBLE-HUNTING BRITISH S.E. 5A FIGHTERS SWEEPED LOW ACROSS THE CHATEAU GROUNDS...

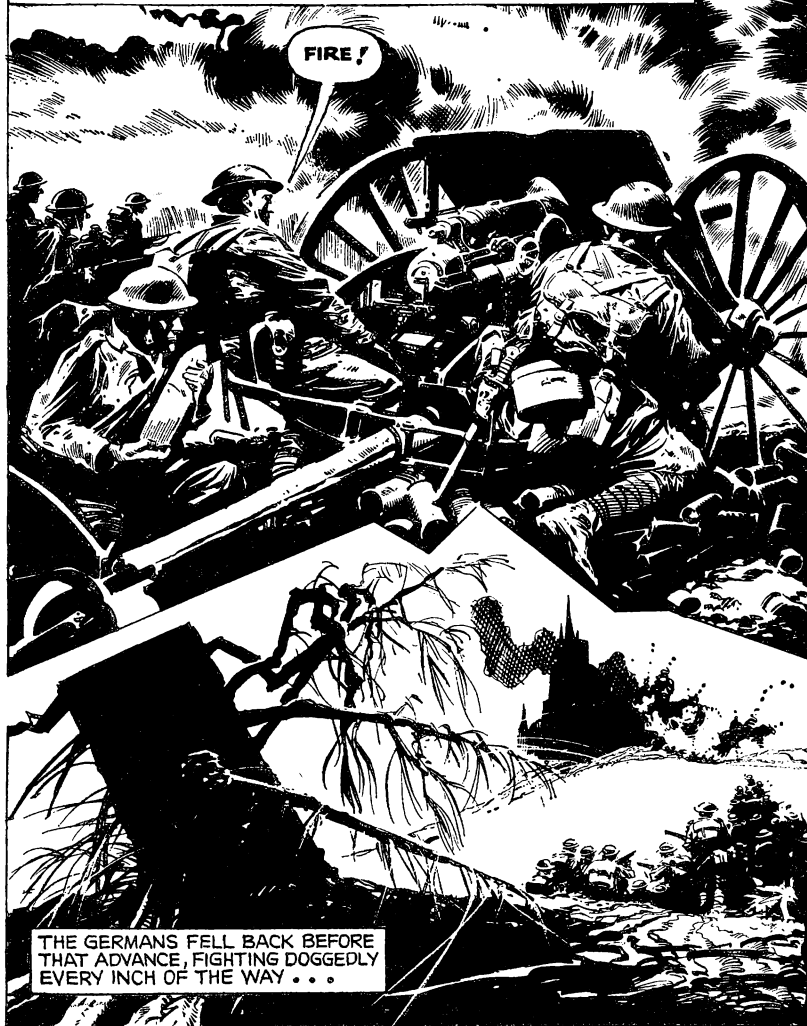


FRAGMENTATION BOMBS SPILLED DOWN ON TO MEN AND VEHICLES...





THE FIGHTER ATTACKS WERE A PRELUDE TO THE ADVANCE OF A
BRITISH BRIGADE WHICH HAD ORDERS TO OVERRUN THE CHATEAU . . .



THE GERMANS FELL BACK BEFORE
THAT ADVANCE, FIGHTING DOGGEDLY
EVERY INCH OF THE WAY . . .



BUT THE BRITISH HAD THE SCENT OF
VICTORY NOW. THEY CLOSED IN ON THEIR
OBJECTIVE.



A SHELL CANNOT CHOOSE BETWEEN SOLDIER AND NON-COMBATANT. NO-ONE EXPECTS A NURSE AND A BABY TO BE IN THE FRONT LINE . . .



WHEN THE NURSE RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS, THE BATTLE RAGED ALL ABOUT HER . . .



WITH FRIGHTENED BUT DEVOTED DETERMINATION, THE NURSE TIED FREIHERR'S MOTHER'S RING ABOUT HIS NECK...



IN COMMAND OF THE
BRITISH INFANTRY
BATTALION ATTACKING
AT THIS POINT WAS:
LIEUTENANT COLONEL
JAMES RUFUS .

WE'VE GOT
THEM ON THE
RUN — THEY
WON'T TRY TO
HOLD THE
CHATEAU
NOW .

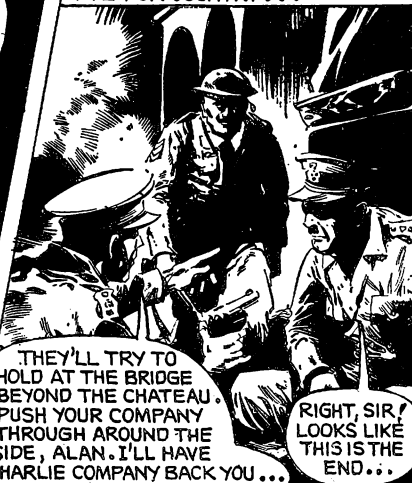
JAMES RUFUS HAD THE SOLDIER'S
EYE FOR COUNTRY . . .

HERE COMES
THE COLONEL,
SIR . . .



THEY'LL TRY TO
HOLD AT THE BRIDGE
BEYOND THE CHATEAU .
PUSH YOUR COMPANY
THROUGH AROUND THE
SIDE, ALAN . I'LL HAVE
CHARLIE COMPANY BACK YOU . . .

RIGHT, SIR!
LOOKS LIKE
THIS IS THE
END . . .



NOT ALL THE ENEMY WERE RUNNING . THERE WAS ONE GERMAN, WOUNDED, YET
DETERMINED UPON REVENGE, WHO STAYED BEHIND . . .



IF I'M TO
DIE — I'LL TAKE
AT LEAST ONE
ACCURSED
ENGLANDER
WITH ME !

MOVING FORWARD WITH THE COLONEL, HARRY STYLES, HIS BATMAN, FIDGETED AT THE RISKS THE C.O. RAN . . .

I DON'T MIND CLEANING HIS BUTTONS AND POLISHING HIS BOOTS—BUT THIS IS TOO BLOOMING DANGEROUS FOR MY LIKING.



A BULLET CRACKED UNPLEASANTLY CLOSE TO JAMES RUFUS AND HE GAVE A WARNING SHOUT . . .

SNIPER! GET YOUR HEAD DOWN, HARRY!

LUMME! YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME, SIR!



THE GERMAN SNIPER LABORIOUSLY
RELOADED . . .

ACH! I MISSED — BUT
THAT OFFICER — HE
MUST — MUST BE
KILLED . . .



THE NURSE, TOO, HAD RECOGNISED
THE OFFICER'S UNIFORM. DESPITE
THE NOISE AND THE CRACK OF BULLETS,
SHE ROSE AND RAN IMPLOINGLY
TOWARDS RUFUS . . .



DONNER!
WHAT — WHO . . .

BEFORE HE COULD STOP HIMSELF, THE WOUNDED SNIPER HAD PRESSED THE
TRIGGER. THE NURSE COLLAPSED EVEN AS HARRY STYLES TOOK A SNAP SHOT
AT THE HIDDEN MARKSMAN . . .



THERE'S THE
BLIGHTER! I'VE
GOT HIM!

THE SNIPER PITCHED FROM HIS TREE, DEAD BEFORE HE HIT THE GROUND.



BUT HIS SHOT HAD ALTERED THE DESTINIES OF MANY PEOPLE.

COLONEL JAMES RUFUS LOOKED DOWN IN HORRIFIED DISTRESS AT THE DYING NURSE AND THE BABY WHO HAD CRAWLED TO HER SIDE.



THE BOY! HE IS ALONE NOW—LOOK AFTER HIM! SWEAR YOU WILL!

WHAT? YES—YES, OF COURSE...

GOOD GRIEF! WHAT A SITUATION! WHAT THE BLAZES CAN I DO WITH THIS LITTLE CHAP...



HARRY STYLES COULD HARDLY BELIEVE
HIS EYES . . .

STONE
THE CROWS!
A BABY!



YES, HARRY—
YOU'D BETTER TAKE
HIM TO THE REAR .
WE'LL DO WHAT WE
CAN FOR HIM LATER...

WITH HER DYING BREATH, THE
GERMAN NURSE MADE RUFUS
REPEAT HIS PROMISE . . .

SWEAR YOU'LL
TAKE CARE OF
HIM! SWEAR!
BY ALL YOU
HOLD SACRED!

YES—I SWEAR
TO LOOK AFTER
HIM . NOW CALM
YOURSELF...



IN ANOTHER PART OF THAT SMALL BATTLEFIELD A
SHELL FINISHED THE HONOURABLE CAREER OF COLONEL
GENERAL SIEGFRIED, GRAF VON STAHLEIM . . .



WHEN THE BATTLE WAS OVER, BOTH SIDES COUNTED THE COST. AT CASTLE STAHLHEIM, A SLY-LOOKING BOY OF TEN NAMED HELMUT WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO DID NOT SHARE THE GENERAL GRIEF...



THE WAR ENDED AND THE BABY BOY, FREIHERR, WAS TAKEN INTO THE FAMILY OF COLONEL RUFUS, AND RENAMED PETER...



Chapter 2. A NEW WAR

A QUARTER OF A CENTURY LATER,
JAMES RUFUS COMMANDED A DIVISION
THAT WAS SPEARHEADING THE FINAL
ONSLAUGHT ON THE GERMAN FATHERLAND...

IT'S NOT A PLEASANT
DAY FOR THE DRIVE,
SIR.

THE WEATHER'S NOT
STOPPING ME FROM HAVING
A LOOK AT THE NEW BATTALION.
THE BIG PUSH IS COMING,
STEVE!

AS MAJOR GENERAL JAMES RUFUS DROVE OUT ONE END OF THE VILLAGE, A
JEEP DROVE IN AT THE OTHER...

HERE WE ARE,
SIR — DIV. H.Q...

I MUST STOP TO SEE MY
FATHER, BUT I'D BETTER NOT
BE LONG — HE'LL BE BUSY...

FOR YOUNG CAPTAIN PETER RUFUS, AS FOR MANY OTHERS, THE WAR HAD GONE ON TOO LONG...

THE AIR OF WEARY BOREDOM INSIDE THE HEADQUARTERS ANNOYED YOUNG PETER RUFUS...



BUT AT THAT MOMENT, EVENTS WERE IN MOTION WHICH WOULD BANISH ALL LETHARGY IN THAT BRITISH H.Q.—AND INTRODUCE IT TO THE REALITIES OF FRONT LINE ACTION WITH STARTLING SUDDENNESS.

THE WEATHER IS ON OUR SIDE! THIS CLOUD WILL CONCEAL OUR APPROACH.

JA! THE ENGLANDER HEADQUARTERS WILL HAVE NO PRIOR WARNING OF OUR COMING.

LEADING THIS SMALL FORCE OF ELITE NAZI PARACHUTE TROOPS WAS MAJOR ZIEGLER, A TOUGH AND UTTERLY DEDICATED SOLDIER.

IF INTELLIGENCE HAVE MADE NO MISTAKE, THE BRITISH COMMANDER IN CHIEF IS BELOW US NOW—WAITING TO BE KILLED!

UNFORTUNATELY FOR THE ZEALOUS MAJOR ZIEGLER, NAZI INTELLIGENCE HAD SLIPPED BADLY. THERE WAS NOT EVEN A MAJOR GENERAL AT THE HEADQUARTERS!



THE PARATROOPERS HAD REACHED THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE BRITISH HEADQUARTERS VILLAGE BEFORE THE SHOOTING BEGAN . . .



NAZI FIRE DROVE ALL THOUGHTS OF RESISTANCE FROM THE MINDS OF THE SOFT, H.Q. TROOPS, WHO HASTILY SOUGHT COVER AS THE ENEMY ADVANCED.



FOR YOUNG CAPTAIN PETER RUFUS, THE RETURN TO ACTION HAD COME MUCH FASTER THAN HE HAD EXPECTED...



UNDER PETER'S TOUGH COMMAND AND WITH THE HELP OF A SERGEANT OR TWO, THE DISORGANISED BRITISH HEADQUARTERS TROOPS FELL INTO SOME SORT OF DEFENCE LINE . . .

THEY'RE PARACHUTISTS — DROPPED UNDER COVER OF THIS FILTHY WEATHER !



THEY MUST BE AFTER THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF, SIR — BUT HIS VISIT WAS CANCELLED !

I DON'T LIKE THE CONDUCT OF THE MEN, SAR'NT ! THEY ACT LIKE THEY'VE NEVER SEEN A JERRY BEFORE !



MOST OF 'EM HAVEN'T, SIR — WE ARE BACK AREA TROOPS . . .

THE HOT TEMPER OF YOUNG PETER RUFUS FLARED UP . . .

I DON'T CARE WHAT TROOPS YOU ARE ! SOLDIERS SHOULD BE PREPARED TO FIGHT — LIKE THOSE JERRIES !



SNATCHING UP A DISCARDED
BREN, PETER HURLED HIMSELF
AT THE CHARGING NAZIS . . .

COME ON! WE CAN
SMASH THEIR FLANK
FROM HERE!
INTO 'EM!

I'M WITH
YOU, SIR!

BUT PETER AND THE SERGEANT
WERE ALMOST ALONE AS MAJOR
ZIEGLER TURNED HIS MEN TO
MEET THEM . . .

ACHTUNG!
FLANK
ATTACK!

KEEP
GOING, YOU
CHAPS!

THE SERGEANT DIVED FOR COVER
AS BULLETS SNAPPED ALL AROUND
THEM . . .

IT'S NO GOOD,
SIR! THERE AREN'T
ENOUGH OF US!

WHERE THE DEVIL
ARE THE REST? THEY
CAN'T ALL BE KILLED...

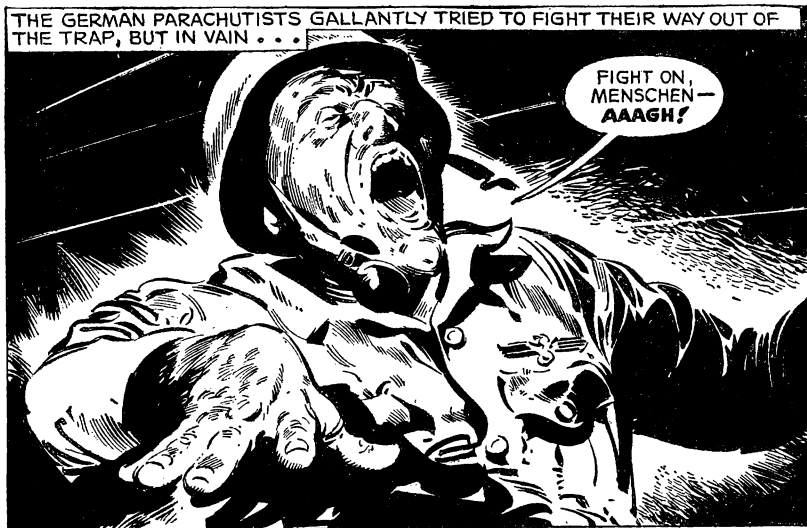
SO PETER RUFUS CAME FACE TO
FACE WITH DEATH . . .

GOOD GRIEF!
THE BREN'S
EMPTY!

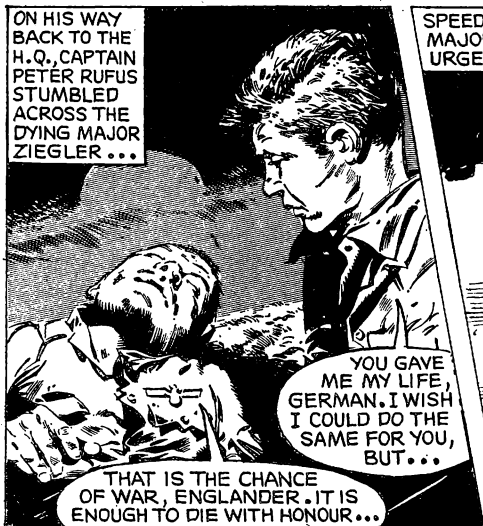
ACH! THERE IS
NO NEED TO KILL
A BRAVE MAN! RUN,
ENGLANDER, RUN! WE
HAVE WORK TO DO!

DAZED BY HIS NARROW
ESCAPE, PETER RUFUS
WATCHED THE NAZIS
DISAPPEAR INTO THE
SMOKE . . .

THESE JERRIES
AREN'T SO BAD, AFTER
ALL! HE COULD HAVE
KILLED ME...



ON HIS WAY
BACK TO THE
H.Q., CAPTAIN
PETER RUFUS
STUMBLED
ACROSS THE
DYING MAJOR
ZIEGLER...



YOU GAVE
ME MY LIFE,
GERMAN. I WISH
I COULD DO THE
SAME FOR YOU,
BUT...

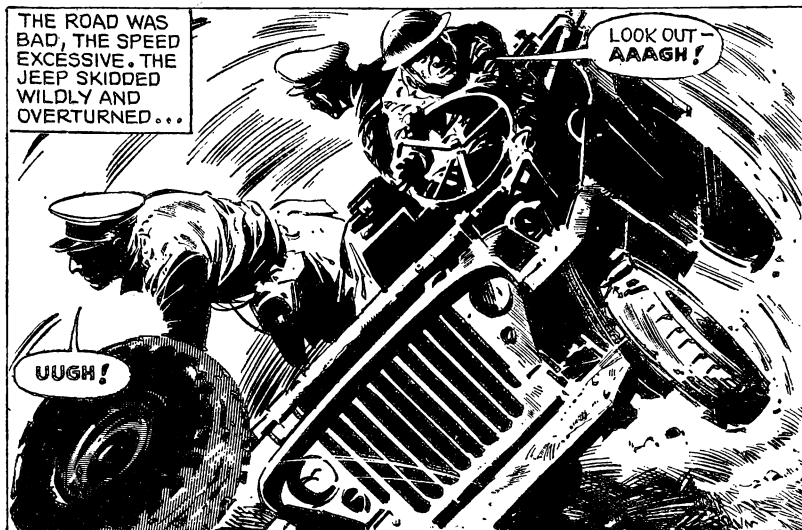
THAT IS THE CHANCE
OF WAR, ENGLANDER. IT IS
ENOUGH TO DIE WITH HONOUR...

SPEEDING BACK TO THE SCENE...
MAJOR GENERAL JAMES RUFUS
URGED HIS DRIVER ON FRANTICALLY...

STEP ON IT,
MAN - THE JERRIES
ARE ATTACKING
MY H.Q.



THE ROAD WAS
BAD, THE SPEED
EXCESSIVE. THE
JEEP SKIDDED
WILDLY AND
OVERTURNED...



LOOK OUT -
AAAGH!

UUGH!

THEY BROUGHT
MAJOR GENERAL
JAMES RUFUS IN
ON A STRETCHER...

HOARSELY, THE DYING MAN GASPED OUT THE
STORY THAT HAD WEIGHED ON HIS MIND OVER
THE YEARS...

SO YOU'RE
NOT REALLY MY
SON. THIS RING—
ALL WE KNOW
OF YOU...

PETER! MY
BOY— YOU!
COME CLOSER—
CLOSER...

SO MY NAME
ISN'T REALLY PETER
RUFUS, BUT WHO AM I?

YOUNG PETER RUFUS
WALKED AWAY FROM
THE DEAD BODY OF
THE MAN HE HAD
THOUGHT WAS HIS
FATHER. HIS BRAIN
WAS ON FIRE...

THE ONLY CLUE TO MY
IDENTITY! BUT WITH
A WAR ON—IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE TO DO
ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
I'LL HAVE TO
SOLDIER ON...

Chapter 3. *FOREST OFFENSIVE*

WITH A TREMENDOUS EFFORT OF WILL, CAPTAIN PETER RUFUS THRUST HIS PERSONAL PROBLEMS INTO THE BACKGROUND—FOR THE NEXT ADVANCE WAS IMMINENT.



PETER RUFUS'S COMPANY WAS DETAILED FOR COVERING OPERATIONS AS THE BATTALION WENT IN . . .



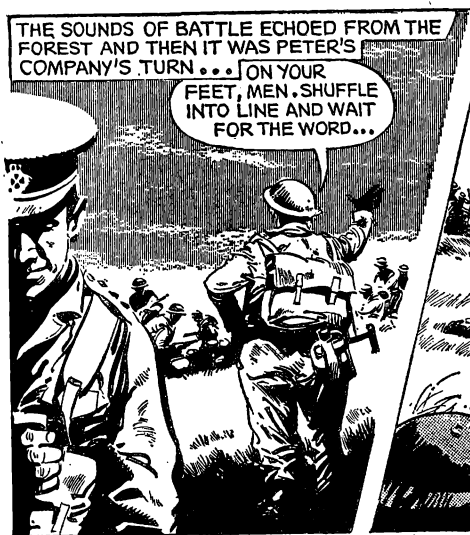
PETER'S COMPANY WATCHED AS THEIR COMRADES
MOVED OFF...

THEY HAVE A TOUGH JOB
ON THEIR HANDS, SIR.
I'M NOT SORRY TO BE
IN SUPPORT TODAY...



THE SOUNDS OF BATTLE ECHOED FROM THE
FOREST AND THEN IT WAS PETER'S
COMPANY'S TURN...

ON YOUR
FEET, MEN. SHUFFLE
INTO LINE AND WAIT
FOR THE WORD...



AT FIRST, THE COMPANY
ADVANCED IN EXTENDED
ORDER QUIETLY INTO THE
FOREST — WITHOUT
OPPOSITION.



BUT SOON, THE LEADING ELEMENTS WERE MOVING PAST THE MEN WHO HAD LED THE ATTACK THAT DAY.



THEY CAME TO A SHORT STRETCH OF CLEAR GROUND—AND THE ENEMY STRUCK.



THE MAJOR SPOKE FEELINGLY...

WALLIS WAS ON POINT!
I'LL BOOK HIM FOR
MISSING THAT
SNIPER, SO
HELP ME!

WALLIS BOUGHT IT,
SAR'-MAJOR — LIKE
THAT JERRY HAS,
NOW!

THE COMPANY MOVED ON AGAIN, MORE CAUTIOUSLY...

STRONGPOINT UP
AHEAD, SIR — A DOZEN
JERRIES AT LEAST.
THERE MAY BE A
GUN, TOO!

AN
EIGHTY-EIGHT,
PROBABLY.

IN THE OMINOUS STILLNESS OF THE FOREST, THE MEN SPOKE IN WHISPERS...



PIATS—AND BRING ALL
THE MORTARS UP INTO
POSITION. WE'LL
HAVE TO CRACK
THIS ONE,
SAR-MAJOR!



WHITE SMOKE BOMBS BURST OVER THE NAZI POSITION . . .

THE CURSED
ENGLANDERS WILL
BE ATTACKING NOW—
BUT WE ARE READY
FOR THEM!

BUT PETER RUFUS DID NOT SEND
HIS MEN INTO A GALLANT AND
HOPELESS FRONTAL ASSAULT .
INSTEAD . . .

THAT'S THE
STYLE! KNOCK
THE BLIGHTERS' WALL
DOWN FIRST!

NAZI MACHINE GUNS GROPED BLINDLY
THROUGH SMOKE FOR TARGETS THE
GUNNERS COULD NOT SEE.

AGAIN AND AGAIN THE PIAT FIRED — AND SLOWLY THE OUTER DEFENCES OF THE BUNKER CRUMBLD . . .

WHEN WILL THE ENGLANDERS COME ?



TWO SECTION DID NOT GET FAR BEFORE THEY DREW A FIERCE TORRENT OF FIRE . . .

COME ON,
YOU DOZY LOT!
MAKE ALL THE
NOISE YOU CAN—
CHAAARGE!







Chapter 4. *CONFLICT OF BLOOD*

AFTER A CAREFUL FORWARD RECONNAISSANCE, PETER RUFUS AT LAST LOOKED ON CASTLE STAHLEIM...

WHEW! THE JERRIES UP THERE COULD SLAUGHTER THE WHOLE DIVISION TRYING TO GET THROUGH THE PASS!

IT'S MOST IMPRESSIVE, SAR'NT—
MOST...

LITTLE DID HE KNOW THAT HE WAS LOOKING AT HIS OWN ANCESTRAL HOME...

ACHTUNG!
ENGLANDERS!

HAUPTMANN STREICH!
TAKE A PATROL AND CAPTURE
THEM! SCHNELL!

A FANÁTICAL NAZI, HAUPTMANN STREICH LED HIS PATROL DOWN TO
AMBUSH THE BRITISH WITH A CERTAIN RELISH . . .



WE NEED ONLY
CAPTURE ONE OF THEM,
I THINK. WE CAN KILL
ALL THE OTHERS.

BUT THE
HERR OBERST
ORDERED US
TO CAPTURE
THEM, HERR
HAUPTMANN...

STREICH WAS ALREADY ON HIS FEET,
URGING HIS MEN TO FIRE . . .



KILL THE
SWINE!

JERRIES!
TAKE COVER!

THE PATROL SWIFTLY PULLED BACK, BUT THE ENEMY HAD THROWN AN IRON RING AROUND THEM.



THEN A STEN GUN CHATTERED DEFIANTLY — AND STREICH COLLAPSED ...

THE NAZIS KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH SCUM LIKE — AAAGH!

A NUMBER OF THE BRITISH HAD FALLEN AND MORE NAZIS WERE CLOSING IN. THEN A SCHMEISSER BULLET CLIPPED ACROSS PETER RUFUS'S SKULL ...



WHEN HE RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS, PETER WAS LYING ON THE FLAGS OF THE CASTLE COURTYARD.

SO THE ENGLISHMAN WAKES UP! YOU WILL HAVE THE MOTHER AND FATHER OF ALL HEADACHES—JA?



BEFORE THE SYMPATHETIC OBERST COULD GIVE ORDERS FOR PETER RUFUS TO BE TAKEN TO THE CELLS, A MOTLEY PROCESSION APPEARED ...



PETER RUFUS STARED IN AMAZEMENT AT THE BRAVE BUT PITIFULLY INADEQUATE GROUP OF YOUNGSTERS AND ANCIENTS AS THEY TOOK UP THEIR POSITIONS . . .



ON THEIR WAY THROUGH THE MAIN HALL OF THE CASTLE, PETER RUFUS LOOKED CURIOUSLY AT THE ARMOUR AND THE PORTRAITS. ONE IN PARTICULAR CAUGHT HIS EYE..



HANS BROUGHT HIM A BOWL OF COLD WATER AND HE WASHED THE MUD AND DRIED BLOOD FROM HIS FACE...



THEN OLD HANS LOOKED MORE CLOSELY AT HIM - AND HIS MOUTH GAPPED OPEN IN AMAZEMENT...



AND THEN THE OLD GERMAN SAW THE RING ON THE STRING AROUND PETER'S NECK. DAZEDLY, THE TWO MEN REACHED AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED . . .



EXCITEDLY, OLD HANS RUSHED TO TELL THE OTHER SERVANTS AND VILLAGERS . . .



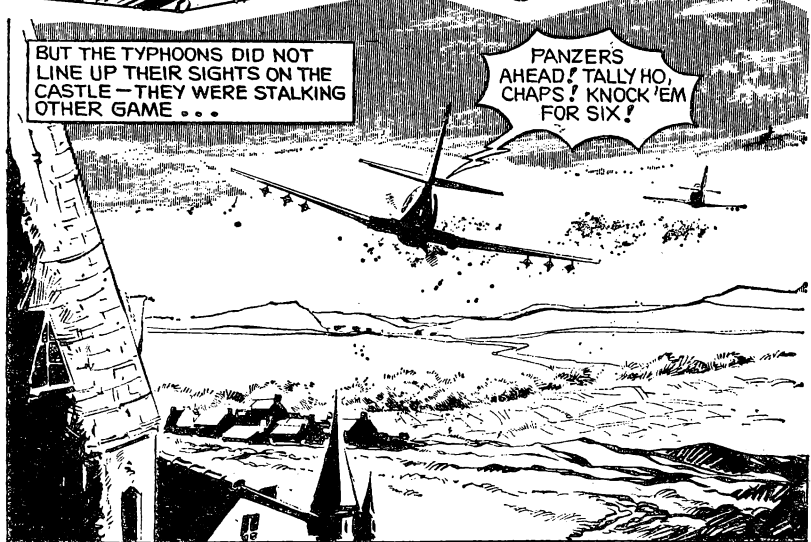
AT THAT MOMENT, THERE WAS AN OMINOUS DRONE IN THE SKY, FOLLOWED BY THE SCREECHING WAIL OF DIVING AIRCRAFT. EVERYONE SCUTTLED FOR COVER, INCLUDING PETER . . .

TEUFEL! ROCKET
FIGHTERS! TAKE
COVER! TAKE
COVER!



BUT THE TYPHOONS DID NOT
LINE UP THEIR SIGHTS ON THE
CASTLE — THEY WERE STALKING
OTHER GAME . . .

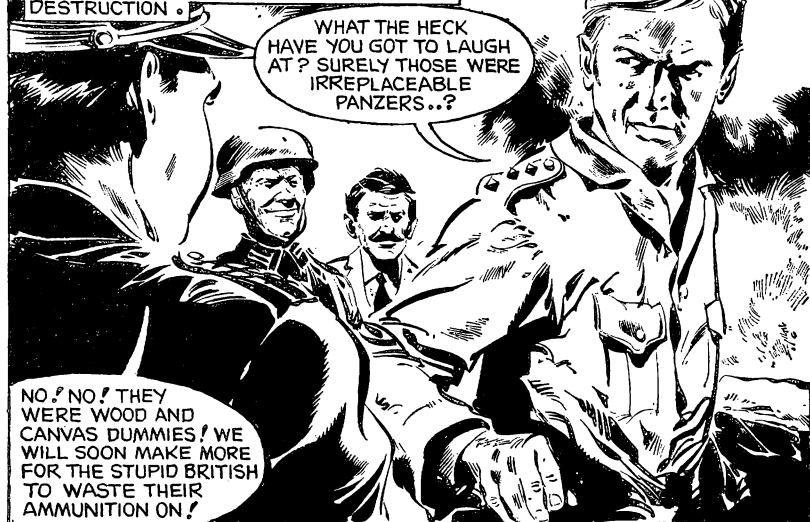
PANZERS
AHEAD! TALLY HO,
CHAPS! KNOCK 'EM
FOR SIX!



ROCKETS WOOSHED EARTHWARDS AND FLAME AND SMOKE ROSE INTO THE AIR AS THE MISSILES HIT THEIR TARGETS .



BACK IN THE CASTLE, PETER RUFUS WAS ASTONISHED TO FIND THE GERMANS ALL LAUGHING AT THE SCENE OF WIDESPREAD DESTRUCTION .



HIS HEAD STILL RINGING FROM THE AFTER EFFECTS OF HIS WOUND AND HIS MIND WHIRLING AT THE REVELATION OF HIS TRUE PARENTAGE, PETER RUFUS WAS UTTERLY CONFUSED.



ALL THIS IS **MINE!** BUT THE BRITISH ARE GOING TO TAKE IT FROM ME! I CAN'T LET THEM TAKE IT AWAY - **NOT NOW!**

GENTLY, OLD HANS PERSUADED HIM TO CHANGE INTO A GERMAN UNIFORM...

YOU ARE THE GRAF VON STAHLEIM AND THESE ARE YOUR LANDS. TOGETHER, WE MUST FIGHT FOR WHAT IS OURS! IS THAT NOT SO, MASTER?



BUT EVENTS HAD MOVED TOO FAST FOR PETER. HE BEGAN TO AGREE—AND THEN WEAKNESS OVERWHELMED HIM . . .



THEY HAD HARDLY TAKEN THE NEW GRAF INTO THE CASTLE WHEN JACKBOOTS CLATTERED ON THE COBBLES AND ON THE STONE STAIRWAYS. HELMUT AND HIS S.S. MEN HAD RETURNED TO STAHLHEIM . . .



THE NAZI-APPOINTED GRAF VON STAHLHEIM PARADED HIS MEN IN THE COURTYARD...



HELMUT LAUGHED BRAYINGLY AT THE OBERST'S TROUBLED QUESTION . . .

DESTROY? OF COURSE!
WE WILL BLOW THE WHOLE
MOUNTAIN DOWN INTO THE GORGE!
LET THE BRITISH TRY TO GET PAST
THAT!

HELMUT WAS ALWAYS
UNSTABLE - AND NOW HE IS
INSANE! HE'LL TRY TO BURY
THE BRITISH IN THE PASS -
BUT HE WILL DESTROY ALL
OF STAHEIM TO DO IT!

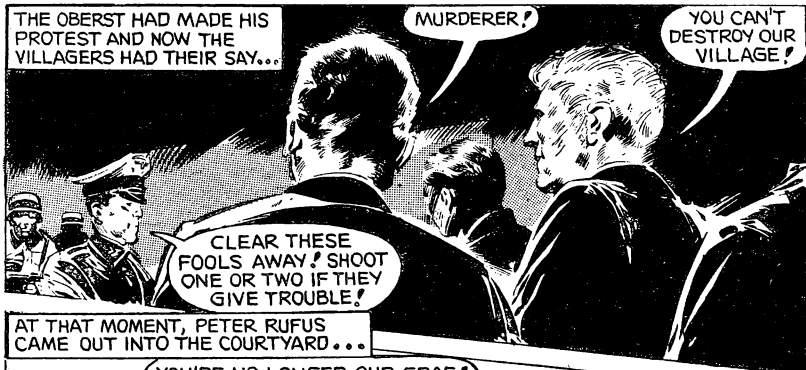
Ooo

HIST! HERR
GRAF - THERE
IS MUCH EVIL
AFOOT...

HUH? WHAT'S
UP - WHAT IS IT,
HANS?



THE OBERST HAD MADE HIS PROTEST AND NOW THE VILLAGERS HAD THEIR SAY...





BLAZING ANGER POSSESSED THE MAN WHO HAD BEEN PETER RUFUS AND WHO WAS NOW GRAF VON STAHLHEIM ...

THIS NAZI CREED! THIS IS THE REAL EVIL WE MUST ALL FIGHT. THEY WOULD DESTROY US ALL!

SCHMEISSER AND MAUSER BULLETS CUT THROUGH THE AIR AS WEHRMACHT AND VOLKSTURM FOUGHT THE BLACK-CLAD KILLERS OF THE THIRD REICH.

TREACHEROUS DOGS!

EVEN THE BRITISH PRISONERS WERE RELEASED TO JOIN IN THE CRUSADE AGAINST THE HATED S.S...

THE WAR IS OVER FOR US, TOMMY— BUT WE HAVE ONE MORE BATTLE TO FIGHT. THERE'S NO TURNING BACK FOR US NOW!

WHAT THE HECK'S GOING ON? WHERE'S THE CAPTAIN?

THEIR OWN WEAPONS WERE THROWN BACK IN THE PUZZLED PRISONERS' HANDS. THEN THE BRITISH SERGEANT ADDED CAPTAIN PETER RUFUS . . .



THE SAVAGE GUN DUEL AWAKENED THE ECHOES OF THE ANCIENT CASTLE. THE S.S. FOUGHT WITH BLIND OBEDIENCE TO THE ORDERS OF THEIR CRAZED OFFICER, THE VOLKSTURM TO SAVE THEIR VILLAGE AND HOMES FROM DESTRUCTION, THE BRITISH TO FOIL THE NAZI ATTEMPT TO HALT THEIR DIVISION'S ADVANCE .



LEAVING HIS HENCHMEN TO KEEP UP
THE FIGHT, HELMUT SCUTTLED
FOR THE CELLARS...

THE SWINE WILL
NOT STOP ME BRINGING
THIS WHOLE PLACE DOWN
ABOUT THEIR EARS!

ACHTUNG!
LOOK, GRAF—
HELMUT IS GOING
TO THE CELLARS...

PETER RUFUS, IGNORING THE
HAIL OF BULLETS, SPRANG TO
HIS FEET AND STARTED AFTER
THE S.S. MAN...

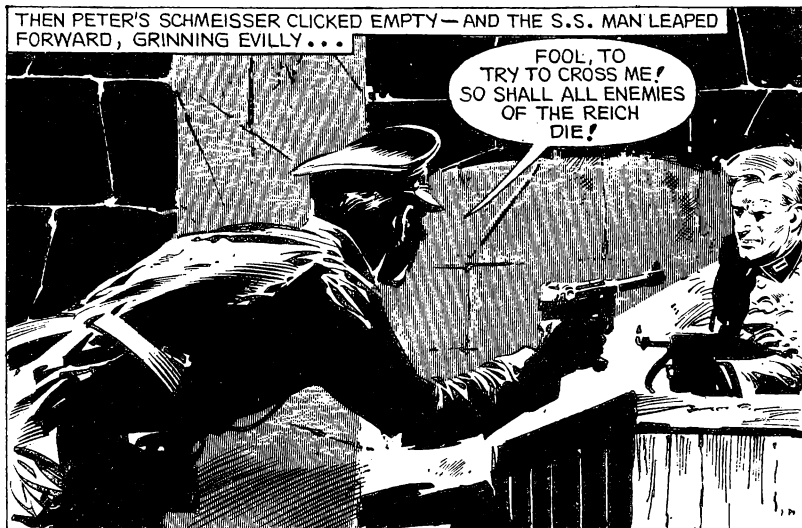
THE DIVISION!
THEY'RE COMING
THROUGH THE
PASS!

I CAN'T
LET HIM GET AWAY
WITH IT...

CLATTERING DOWN THE STEEP, STONE STAIRCASE, HE HEARD THE SOUND OF
AFTER HELMUT.

THE ROARING ECHO OF
GUNSHOTS CRASHED BACK
FROM THE DANK OLD CELLAR
WALLS, THE VIVID ORANGE
MUZZLE FLASHES BRIEFLY LIT
THE GLOOM.

SURRENDER,
HELMUT—THE WAR
IS AS GOOD AS
OVER.



WHEN THE GRAF VON STAHLHEIM REACHED THE BATTLEMENTS OF HIS CASTLE AGAIN, HANS GREETED HIM THANKFULLY ...

YOU ARE SAFE, GRAF!
AND WHAT ABOUT HELMUT..?

HE IS
FINISHED,
HANS. IT IS
ALL OVER!



THE MOUNTING ROAR OF VEHICLE ENGINES SOUNDED FROM THE PASS BELOW. THE BRITISH DIVISION WAS MOVING SAFELY FORWARD ON THE ROAD TO VICTORY ...

I MUST LEAVE NOW,
HANS. THE WAR WILL SOON
BE OVER. I SHALL RETURN
TO CLAIM WHAT IS MINE
BY BIRTH ...



ONCE MORE IN BRITISH UNIFORM, CAPTAIN PETER RUFUS TOOK LEAVE OF THE PEOPLE OF STAHLHEIM . . .



BUT IT WOULD BE AS FREIHERR, GRAF VON STAHLHEIM THAT HE WOULD RETURN — TO THE DESTINY THAT HAD AWAITED HIM FOR A QUARTER OF A CENTURY.

TANK TRAP

SAM WESTRUM DID NOT THINK MUCH OF NORWAY. BUT THAT WAS NOT VERY SURPRISING. FOR HE WAS ONE OF THE BRITISH REAR-GUARD TRYING TO HOLD BACK THE GERMANS...



COME ON, SAM, WE'RE PULLING OUT!

HANG ON! THERE'S SOMEONE TRAPPED IN THAT WRECKAGE...



SAM STRUGGLED FRANTICALLY WITH THE DEBRIS...

THANK YOU, MY FRIEND. I THOUGHT I WAS FINISHED...

I'LL SOON HAVE YOU OUT, MATE!



SAM FREED THE NORWEGIAN AND THE TWO MEN RAN TO JOIN THE OTHERS. . .

JERRY INFANTRY'LL
BE HERE IN A FEW MINUTES,
CHUM, SO YOU'D BEST
COME WITH US.



THE TROOPS HALTED WHEN THEY
REACHED A GOOD POSITION, FOR
THEIR ORDERS WERE TO DELAY THE
GERMANS. . .

THE CIVVY'S
A GOOD WORKER.
SO I'VE FOUND HIM
A JOB, SIR.

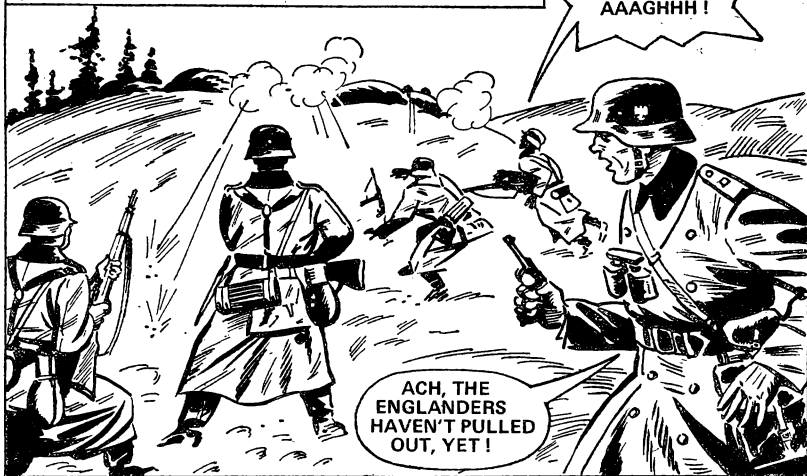
OKAY, SAM, BUT
DON'T GIVE HIM A GUN.
SOME OF THE NORWEGIANS
HAVE BEEN HELPING THE
JERRIES. . .



IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE THE GERMANS ARRIVED.
BUT THEY MET UNEXPECTED OPPOSITION. . .

AAAGHHH !

ACH, THE
ENGLANDERS
HAVEN'T PULLED
OUT, YET !



FRESH FROM A STRING OF VICTORIES,
THEY ATTACKED CONFIDENTLY ...



BUT SAM AND HIS COMPANIONS STOOD
THEIR GROUND WITH DOGGED
COURAGE ...



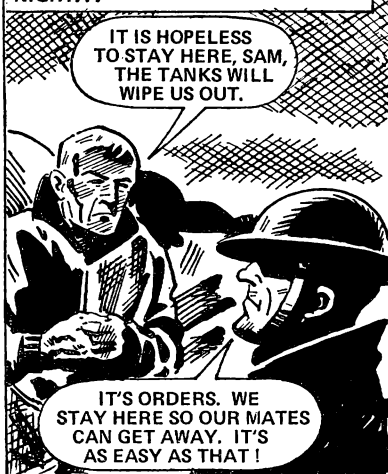
THE GERMANS TRIED AGAIN BEFORE NIGHTFALL,
BUT THEY COULD NOT SMASH A WAY THROUGH ...



WHEN DARKNESS CAME, THE WEARY DEFENDERS
TRIED TO SNATCH SOME SLEEP...



SAM FOUND IT HARD TO SLEEP THAT
NIGHT...



AS THE NIGHT PASSED, THE
NORWEGIAN BECAME RESTLESS...



BUT SHEER WEARINESS CAUSED SAM TO CLOSE HIS EYES FOR A FEW MINUTES. AND WHEN HE WOKE...

YOUR NORWEGIAN'S GONE !
I HOPE HE DOESN'T GO
STRAIGHT TO THE JERRIES.

MAYBE
HE WENT
OFF TO SAVE
HIMSELF,
SIR...



BUT, HALF-A-MILE AWAY...

HALTE !

DON'T SHOOT,
I'M A FRIEND ! I
MUST SPEAK TO
YOUR OFFICER...



THE GERMAN COMMANDER LISTENED IN SURPRISE AS JAN OFFERED INFORMATION...

YOU SAY THE BRITISH
HAVE LAID MINES IN
FRONT OF THEIR POSITION?
ANTI-TANK MINES ?

YES, THEY
DID IT WHEN
THEY HEARD YOUR
PANZERS. BUT I CAN
SHOW YOU A WAY
ROUND THE
FLANK...



THE COLONEL WAS NOT COMPLETELY CONVINCED, BUT HE WAS PREPARED TO TAKE A CHANCE ...

YOU'LL BE SAFE THERE, MY FRIEND, UNLESS YOU LEAD US INTO A TRAP. THEN YOU'LL BE FIRST TO DIE!

I'M HURT THAT YOU DON'T TRUST ME, HERR OBERST. BUT SOON YOU'LL HAVE PROOF!



AT DAWN, THE TANKS SET OUT TO TAKE THE BRITISH BY SURPRISE.

THEY'VE GOT A PLATOON OVER THERE, WELL DUG IN, SO SPREAD YOUR TANKS INTO LINE!

ALL RIGHT, MY FRIEND. BUT DON'T FORGET THAT THE FIRST ANTI-TANK SHELL WILL PROBABLY HIT YOU.!



BUT THERE WERE NO SHELLS - FOR AS THE TANKS SURGED FORWARD ACROSS THE SMOOTH SNOW ...

LONG LIVE FREEDOM!

HIMMEL! A FROZEN LAKE.!



WATCHED HELPLESSLY BY THE SUPPORTING INFANTRY,
THE PANZERS PLUNGED INTO THE ICY WATER . . .



AS THE SUN ROSE, THE BRITISH WAITED ANXIOUSLY.
BUT THERE WAS NO SIGN OF THE ENEMY . . .



GET THE MEN TOGETHER, CORPORAL. WE'RE ORDERED TO REJOIN THE REST OF THE DIVISION, WE'RE OFF BEFORE THE GERMANS WAKE UP.

SO WE'VE A CHANCE OF SEEING ENGLAND AGAIN AFTER ALL ...!



THEY SLIPPED AWAY QUIETLY BEFORE THE GERMANS HAD GATHERED FOR A FRESH ATTACK, WEARY BUT UNBEATEN ...

IT SEEMS I WAS WRONG ABOUT YOUR NORWEGIAN, SAM. MAYBE HE JUST NIPPED OFF HOME AFTER ALL!

WELL, YOU CAN'T REALLY BLAME HIM, SIR. HE'S A CIVILIAN. THIS REALLY ISN'T HIS WAR ...



Published each month by IPC Magazines Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Printed by Fleetway Printers, Gravesend, Kent. Subscription Rates: £8.00 for 96 numbers, £4.00 for 48 numbers. Enquiries to: IPC Magazines Ltd. (Subscriptions Dept.), Tower House, Southampton Street, London, WC2E 9QX. Sole Agents: Australia and New Zealand, Gordon & Gotch, Ltd.; South Africa, Central News Agency, Ltd.; Rhodesia and Zambia, Kingstons, Ltd. BATTLE PICTURE LIBRARY is sold subject to the following conditions, that it shall not without the written consent of the Publishers first given, be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of Trade except at the full retail price shown on the cover; and that it shall not be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of in a mutilated condition, or in any unauthorised cover by way of Trade; or affixed to or as part of any publication or advertising, literary or pictorial matter whatsoever.

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